

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

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R 051202 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1474

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

UNCLAS BEIRUT 3935

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, LY

SUBJECT: QADHAFI ON MILITARY STRATEGY

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: BEIRUT' S PRO- CAIRO AL ANWAR FRONT-PAGED THREE ARTICLES APR 3-5 BY LIBYA' S QADHAFI IN WHICH HE DECRIED ARAB HESITATION AT DECISIVE MOMENTS OF CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL, PRAISED VIRTUES OF RAPID MOBILITY, AND EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF STRIKING ENEMY AT WEAK POINTS. DESPITE QADHAFI' S EVIDENT DESIRE TO APPEAR AS ARAB CLAUSEWITZ, HIS ARTICLES CONTAIN NO NEW OR PROFOUND ADVANCES IN MILITARY SCIENCE, NOR DO THEY APPEAR CONTAIN ANYTHING NEW ON LARG POLICIES OR ACTIONS.
END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER CITING IN FIRST ARTICLE EXAMPLES, RANGING FROM FRANCE (1939) TO MOROCCO (1971), OF BATTLES LOST OR MADE MORE COSTLY BY HESITATION AT CRUCIAL MOMENTS, QADHAFI CRITICIZED NASSER FOR " FATAL AND SHAMEFUL ARAB HESITANCY"
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ON EVE OF JUNE 1967 WAR WHEN HE LEFT INITIATIVE TO ISRAEL. HE CATALOGUED OTHER EXAMPLES OF HESITATION BY ARAB CONTEMPORARIES, BUT NOTED HE CAREFUL NOT TO MAKE SAME MISTAKES WHEN HE WENT PROMPTLY TO AID OF SUDAN'S NUMAYRI IN 1971. COMPLAINING THAT ARAB MILITARY MOVES ARE USUALLY HAMPERED BY FEAR OF CONSEQUENCES AND "LACK OF SERIOUSNESS IN GIVEN SITUATIONS," QADHAFI VOICED TRUISM THAT MISSED OPPORTUNITIES NOT LIKELY TO REAPPEAR.

3. IN SECOND ARTICLE, QADHAFI DISCUSSED NEED FOR "QUICK MOBILITY" IN MILITARY STRATEGY. CITING PRINCIPLE LEARNED DURING HIS CADET DAYS AT LIBYAN MILITARY ACADEMY, HE PRAISED NASSER'S RAPID DEPLOYMENT OF EGYPTIAN FORCES IN YEMEN IN 1962 AND HIS SWIFT MOVE TO OCCUPY SHARM ASH SHAYKH IN 1967. UNFORTUNATELY, HE SAID, LATTER HAD BEEN NEGATED BY EGYPTIAN HESITANCY IN MAINTAINING MILITARY INITIATIVE AGAINST ISRAEL.

4. IN THIRD ARTICLE, QATTAFI EXPOUNDED ON TACTICAL BENEFITS OF ATTACKING ENEMY WEAK POINTS, CITING ISRAELI PORT OF EILAT AS IMPORTANT, VULNERABLE TARGET PREVIOUSLY IGNORED BY ARAB GENERALS BECAUSE OF THEIR LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF PROPER (I. E., QADHAFI'S) PRINCIPLES OF WARFARE.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SOME FOREIGN NEWSMEN IN BEIRUT HAVE INTERPRETED ABOVE ARTICLES AS EFFORT BY QADHAFI TO PRESSURE SADAT INTO UNDERTAKING NEW MILITARY ADVENTURES AGAINST ISRAEL, THEY DO NOT SEEM PORTEND NEW DEVELOPMENTS. HIS JEJUNE GRASP OF MILITARY ART SUGGESTS HE MAY HAVE GOT HOLD OF OLD TRAINING MANUAL ON SMALL-UNIT TACTICS AND IS USING IT TO CONVEY IMAGE OF MODERN STRATEGIST. ON BASIS OF HIS ARTICLES, WE REGARD NAPOLEON'S REPUTATION AS SECURE.
BUFFUM

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

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*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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